

Section VI: Reserve Career Management

A. Introduction To The Career Planning Program.

1. **General.** The Career Planning Program is the key to achieving career force goals within the Ready Reserve. The primary purpose of the program is to reenlist quality Marines to meet the overall career force MOS requirements, and to reenlist the best qualified Marines to sustain appropriate career force experience levels.

This section focuses upon the Marine Corps Reserve as a second career, and offers practical information to help guide the Marine through what may seem a confusing maze of mysterious opportunities at the 190 Marine Corps Reserve Home Training Centers, bases, and stations across the United States, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

Studies show that continuation within the Corps—beyond the initial contract—is motivated more by the challenges to, and contributions of, Marines than by the pay and benefits. Values such as patriotism, integrity, loyalty, and honor personify men and women who join and stay in the Corps. Marines should evaluate their desire to seek higher rank, leadership development, increasing responsibility, professional education and training, and continuing participation with the Corps (not just pay and benefits including retirement) when planning their careers.

Detailed career planning and counseling are vital to both the individual Marine and the Marine Corps as an institution. In order to meet the combined motives and purposes of each, Marines must carefully consider the opportunities available to them, and plan for a career that not only enhances their professional growth and advancement, but that will also serve the objectives of Corps and Country.

B. How to Plan: Geography, MOS Matches and Time.

1. **A Reserve career is different from an active component counterpart's career.**
A former Commandant of the Marine Corps once remarked to an all-Reserve audience:

“You must all be the hardest working geniuses around. You’re terrific Marines **and** successes at full-time civilian jobs. I have enough trouble with my one job.”

Of course, the General was being generous, while offering some introductory humor. But the comment carried with it a basic truth: Most Marines aspire to excel in (at least) two very different careers.

Reserve Marines, particularly those in a pay status, have intense and conflicting demands upon their time. Neither a full-time civilian nor the active duty Marine fully appreciates the tugs and pulls on the life of a reserve Marine who manages a double career. Truth in advertising must explain that, with all the time, energy and devotion involved, a reserve career is not for everyone. But for those who accept and welcome the challenges, the rewards are many, and they endure for a lifetime.

There are other important differences between the reserve Marine and Active component Marine. The Active component Marine regular works in a full-time assignment, and (with some notable exceptions) need not worry about a long distance commute to the assigned place of duty.

Family issues affect Marines differently, too. A Marine Corps base is a ready-made support system for spouses and families, where the community is composed of similarly situated people and uniformly positive views about the military. In some areas, however, the Marine's family is unique. Pressures from home, therefore, can be different in kind and scope for the Marine. Marines, however, will likely tie their reserve destiny to whatever reserve units happen to be in close geographic proximity.

2. **Geographic Proximity to a Reserve Unit.** Whereas active component Marines receive assignments and orders that match MOSs with appropriate units and stations, a Reserve infantryman might live hundreds of miles from the nearest infantry unit. "MOS matches" are constant sources of concern in the Reserve, and no easy solution is in sight.
3. **Reserve Billets and MOS Qualification.** Appendices A, B, and H list Reserve units and their geographic locations. Reserve units almost always have some billet openings (see paragraph 4, below). Marines who already possess an MOS that matches the needs of the Reserve unit or billet for which they are applying are easily "joined" and can contribute almost immediately to the unit's mission. All Reserve commanders and OICs know, however, that not all applicants will

exactly match the MOS requirements of available billets. Often, Marines who desire to participate and contribute to the Reserve mission are joined and then retrained in a new MOS.

MOS training for newly joined Marines should be accomplished within 18 months of joining the unit. The goal for MOS training is for the Marine to attend the appropriate MOS-producing school just as an active counterpart would. However, due to civilian job constraints or attendance at a civilian school, many Reserve Marines receive on-the-job training or achieve the required MOS training through several shorter periods of attendance at training schools or courses, which produce a MOS-qualified Marine. The needs of the Marine Corps for MOS-qualified personnel to perform the mission are the driving factor in joining and retraining Marines in the Reserve.

4. **Marine Corps Reserve Opportunities.** There are many opportunities for Marines to serve and participate in the Marine Corps. These opportunities can be located by viewing information posted on the websites described below.
 - a. **Marine On Line (MOL)(www.mol.usmc.mil).** This website is an administrative portal for all Marines, designed to provide global, on line access to pay and personnel matters.
 - (1) Global access to pay and personnel tools and information viewed electronically, in a password-protected, secure environment. This includes information on Career Retirement Credit Reports (CRCR), training, pay, and other current USMC-related topics.
 - (2) Centralized repository of personnel information and administrative business processes.
 - (3) Self-service tool for Marines to initiate routine personnel action requests or certify personal data.
 - (4) Provide links to numerous personnel and information sites such as DFAS/EMSS, NMCI, ROWS, and many others.
 - b. **Reserve Duty On Line (RDOL).** This website is accessed through MOL.

It provides a single information source regarding Reserve Duty opportunities for Marines and their units. It is accessible to all Reserve Marines and Active Duty Marines within six months of their EAS.

- (1) Marines can search for Reserve billet openings, Active Duty Special Work (ADSW), and Reserve Counterpart Training (RCT) openings. Searches can be conducted by state, MOS, or distance.
- (2) Units, Operational Sponsors, and ADSW/RCT Sponsors have access to additional functions which allow them greater ability to conduct, post, and manage their searches for qualified Marines.

Additionally, Marines who want to participate and do not have access to a computer network need only call the nearest Reserve unit, Prior Service Recruiter, Reserve Support Unit (RSU), or MCRSC to find out about billet opportunities and their locations.

C. Career Counseling. Reserve career guidance is available through the Reserve Career Management Team (CMT), located in Quantico, VA. Career counselors within the Officer and Enlisted Section of the CMT are available to provide career counseling, career evaluation assistance, and to review a Marine's personnel file upon request. Reserve Marines may call toll free 1-877-415-9275, option #1 (enlisted #5). Additional information is available via the Internet at: <http://www.mfr.usmc.mil> (MARFORRES), and at www.manpower.usmc.mil (Manpower and Reserve Affairs–M&RA). This information is listed below:

• **Career Opportunities**

- Active Reserve Officer
- Active Reserve Enlisted
- RDOL (ADSW and SMCR/IMA/IRR Billets)
<http://www.usmc.mil/maradmins/maradmin2000.nsf/37f49138fc3d9c00852569b9000af6b7/6182e804273dfede85256c200782905?OpenDocument>
- MARADMIN 477/02 (Reserve Officer PME)

• **Bonuses**

- Selected Reserve Incentive Program (SRIP)
https://lnweb1.manpower.usmc.mil/manpower/mi/mra_ofct.nsf/ra/kicker+info
- Montgomery GI Bill—Selected Reserve Kicker
- Reserve Promotion Affiliation Program

• **Miscellaneous**

- Reserve Retirement Overview
- Officer Reappointments

Important enlisted counseling information is also included in Appendix D (Reserve Promotion Guide) under Additional Enlisted Career Counseling Information.

Prior Service Recruiters throughout the country are outstanding sources of career information on billet availability and other service opportunities. Other sources of career information and counseling for SMCR Marines are commanding officers and OICs at the I&I sites. Telephone numbers for the I&I sites and the Prior Service Recruiters are found in Appendix H of this Guidebook.

D. Sample Careers. There is no one formula for a successful career in the Marine Corps Reserve. The elements for success in a reserve career are participation, demonstrated performance, professional military education, academic education, and career planning. Marines may participate in the active and reserve components, in Selective Marine Corps Reserve units or Individual Mobilization Detachments, in Mobilization Training Units, or as an Individual Ready Reserve. A successful reserve career depends largely upon the efforts of the individual Marine. But it is important to know that help and information are available when requested.

1. **Enlisted reserve** career development might be generally described as follows:

- a. E-1 through E-5: Basic MOS training and development; combat and leadership skill development; entry level PME, such as the NCO Basic Nonresident Course; and other professional reading.
- b. E-5 through E-6: Continue advanced MOS development; develop and demonstrate combat skills and leadership development at the small unit level; complete career level PME, such as the SNCO Career Nonresident Course; and other professional reading.
- c. E-7: Continue demonstrated leadership at the company level; develop and demonstrate managerial leadership and judgment skills; complete advanced level PME, such as the SNCO Advanced Nonresident Course and the Warfighting Skills Program; determine career path selection for First Sergeant or Master Sergeant; and continued professional reading.
- d. E-8: Develop and demonstrate senior level leadership, technical, and personnel management skills; complete the First Sergeant/Master Sergeant Regional seminar; and continued professional reading. First Sergeants must attend the Marine Corps First Sergeant School.

- e. E-9: Demonstrate senior level management, leadership, and personnel skills; serve as the principal enlisted assistant and advisor to the commander; complete the Sergeant Major/Master Gunnery Sergeant Symposium; and continued professional reading.

2. **Reserve officer** career development might generally be described as follows:

- a. O-1 through O-2: Develop and demonstrate MOS and basic leadership skills at the small unit level; develop tactical skills; begin PME courses, such as the Warfighting Skills program and MAGTF Fundamentals course; participate in the professional reading program.
- b. O-3: Demonstrate tactical and MOS skills; develop operational level skills and knowledge; demonstrate leadership and management skills at the company level; complete PME, such as the Warfighting Skills program, MAGTF Fundamentals course, and the Nonresident Amphibious Warfare Course; and continued professional reading.
- c. O-4: Demonstrate operational level leadership and management skills; develop and demonstrate staff level leadership, management, and technical skills; complete PME, such as the Command and Staff Course Nonresident program; and continued professional readings.
- d. O-5: Demonstrate organizational and staff level skills, leadership, and management capabilities; develop strategic level leadership and management skills; continued professional reading; and PME seminar attendance.
- e. O-6: Demonstrate strategic level leadership and management skills; continued professional reading; and PME strategic level education.

Because Reserve Marines have so many varied and diverse opportunities to serve, and their careers are affected to a large extent by billet availability and geographic influences, a Reserve career may or may not resemble the structure of the following examples. The examples are provided only as a starting point for career management consideration and discussion.

Sample Career Pattern for Marine Corps Reserve Enlisted			
Year	Grade	Career Pattern	Duty
1 1-8	Pvt-PFC Pvt-Sgt	IADT (SMCR Marine) or Active Duty (Active Component)	
4-8	Pvt-Sgt	Member SMCR unit (Marine) Member IRR (Marine)	2-week Annual Training (AT) with unit; Reserve NCO Academy; The Marine NCO MCI; MCI courses as appropriate. RCT/EX Support, PME, and MCI courses.
9-13	SSgt	Section/Branch Member IRR	2-week AT with unit; Reserve SNCO Academy; Nonresident SNCO Career Course (MCI); other MCI courses as appropriate. Reserve SNCO Academy; Nonresident SNCO Career Course (MCI); other MCI courses as appropriate.
14-18	GySgt	Section/Branch SNCOIC w/SMCR unit; IMA Member MTU/IRR Member	2-week AT with unit; MCI courses as appropriate. Non-Resident Advance Courses. Reserve Counterpart Training (RCT), Temporary Active Duty; Exercise Augmentation; MCI courses as appropriate; Preassignment to a mobilization billet.
19-21	SgtMaj MgySgt 1st Sgt MSgt	SMCR/IMA/MTU/ IRR Member SMCR/IMA/MTU/ IRR Member	Duty in SMCR/IMA billet Assigned as member of a Preassigned Mobilization billet.

Sample Career Pattern for Marine Corps Reserve Officer			
Year	Grade	Career Pattern	Duty
1-5	Lt	Active Duty	
6-12	Capt	Member SMCR Unit (Marine)	2-week Annual Training (AT) with unit; Reserve Amphibious Warfare School (Phases I and II); Reserve Staff Courses as appropriate for grade and MOS.
13-18	Maj	CO/XO/Staff Officer of SMCR MTU/IRR Member	2-week AT with unit; Reserve Command and Staff unit; IMA Member Course; Reserve Staff Courses as appropriate for grade and MOS. Reserve Counterpart Training; Temporary Active Duty; Reserve Command and Staff Courses appropriate for grade and MOS; MCI course exercise augmentation; Preassignment to a mobilization billet.
19-21	LtCol	CO/Special Staff Officer of SMCR unit/ IMA Member MTU/IRR Member	2-week AT with unit; Senior Formal Staff Courses. Senior Formal Staff Courses; MCI courses; member of promotion and policy boards.